

HIGHER FLIGHTS FOR AIRMEN

School of Theology at Claremont



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By W. T. MONEY, M.A., C.F.

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WITH INTRODUCTION BY

L.T.-GENERAL Hon. SIR H. A. LAWRENCE, K.C.B.
CHIEF OF STAFF TO SIR DOUGLAS HAIG



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Theology

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By the Rev. W. T. MONEY, M.A.
Chaplain to the 15th Wing Royal Air Force

With Introduction by
Lieut.-General Hon. Sir H. A. LAWRENCE, K.C.B.
Chief-of-Staff to Sir Douglas Haig

Carleton

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To
THE MANY COMRADES OF THE
47TH (LONDON) DIVISION,
THE 66TH (LANCASHIRE) DIVISION, AND
THE ROYAL AIR FORCE
WHOSE FRIENDSHIP AND GOODWILL
HAVE HELPED ME IN MY TASK
AS A PADRE
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

INTRODUCTION

THIS short volume is the work of one of the devoted band of men of all branches of the Christian religion who through four long years of war ministered to the spiritual needs of our armies in the field. No one who has served with those armies is prepared to deny that in times of national stress the minds of men turn instinctively to prayer as the means of bringing them in closer touch with the Supreme Power which rules all destinies. Any explanation of what prayer means, and what the services of our Churches mean, has the highest value. In this work the author places his view of certain aspects of prayer before his readers.

H. A. LAWRENCE, Lieut.-Gen.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I HAVE ventured to put into print what have been just the simple and short answers I have been able to give to the many officers and men who in the trenches, in billets and on our aerodromes have asked me, "Padre, what do you mean by Confirmation, Prayer, Holy Communion?"

At the Front men have learnt the value of a religion which is real and natural.

It is in the hope that the many young men of our nation, who will doubtless be attracted to flying as a profession which calls for the highest courage and daring, may be helped on to "Higher Flights," also in the service of God and man, that this book is launched on its way.

WILLIAM TAYLOR MONEY.

Belgium, *February 3, 1919.*

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Hymn

FOR THE KNIGHTS OF THE AIR

LORD of the realms of boundless space,
Who set the firmament in place,
Who to their course the planets holds,
And heaven's high majesty unfolds,
Come what, come may of hap or chance,
Thou art our sure deliverance.

With Christ as Pilot by our side
We fear no ill whate'er betide;
Around, above, beneath—Thine arms
Will hold us safe from all alarms,
And since on Thee our souls rely,
Nobly we'll live—or nobly die.

If unto Thee upon Thy throne
The sparrow's fall is surely known,
To us in our supremest hour
Will come the uplift of Thy power.
Our knightly vows we here renew:
Keep us in all things brave and true.

Clearer than most to us is given
To bear us as true Knights of Heaven;
We'll loyal live, or loyal die,
The very flower of chivalry.
O Saviour Christ, our Pilot be
Through Time into Eternity.

—JOHN OXENHAM and W. T. MONEY.

WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?

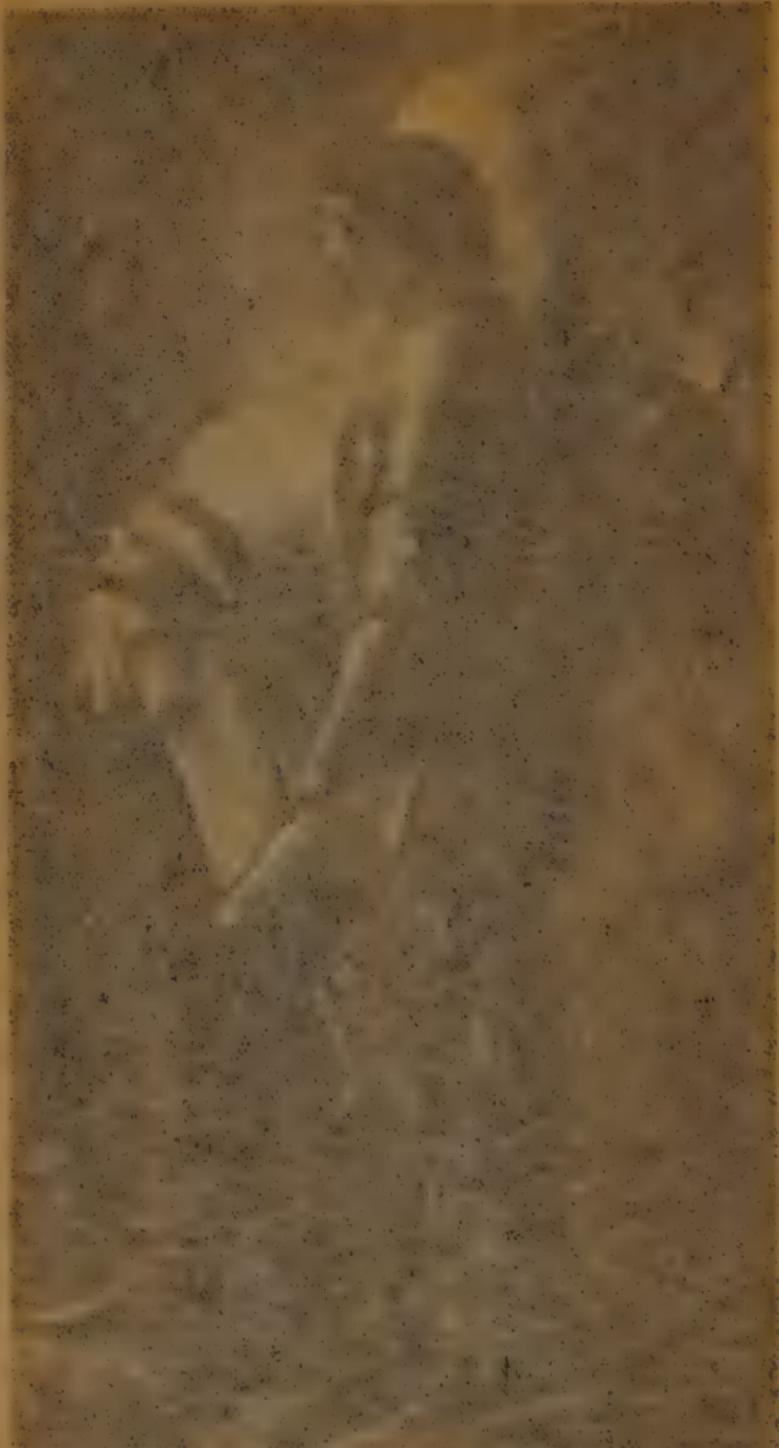


Photo

F. Hollyer

SIR GALAHAD

G. F. Watts, R.A.
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ALAHAN

Watts, R.A.

F. Hellier

HIGHER FLIGHTS FOR AIRMEN

WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?

JOINING UP

JUST as you were a son of Britain at your birth, and as a true son in duty bound to defend your home and country when need demanded and you were old enough, so you were also at your birth a child of God. Your baptism as an infant was a recognition of the fact that you belonged to God, and that you needed, or your soul needed, the mothering Spirit of God just as your human body needed the nursing, feeding, and care of your earthly mother.

At your Baptism your parents and god-

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parents undertook that you should be trained to fight as a Christian soldier under Christ's banner.

Confirmation means, therefore, your coming forward of your own free-will and signing-on as a fighting or serving member in the Army of the Lord (The Church Militant on Earth) and joining your comrades who are holding the thin red line against the great forces of evil.

EQUIPMENT

When you joined up in the Great War you would have been useless at the Front unless properly equipped. You were therefore supplied with :

1. A *uniform* to show which side you were on.
2. A *weapon* to fight the foe.
3. A steel helmet and gas helmet for your protection.
4. A training at some Army centre or school to perfect you in the art of offensive and defensive warfare.

5. Inoculation and rules of health to keep you from being rendered unfit by disease.
6. Supplies of food and ammunition.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand (Eph. vi. 13).

Now the *first great gift* God gives you at your Confirmation is His Holy Spirit.

That does not mean that you receive God's Holy Spirit at your Confirmation for the first time.

As a child your mother saw you had food, clothes, medicine, exercise, all that was necessary for your life then. So when you were definitely placed under the care of the mothering Spirit of God at your Baptism the Holy Spirit saw that your spiritual needs were supplied, and you were shown certain means of grace whereby you could receive them, such as: (1) Prayer, (2) Worship, (3) The Bible, (4) Teaching.

As a soldier you need special and stronger equipment. So the Holy Spirit of God

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comes to you at your Confirmation and in the days after as your great Supply Officer from whom you can draw all you need for service and victory. Take care, therefore, that your trenches and lines of communication are kept intact and properly used.

COMRADESHIP

The grand thing about Confirmation is that it admits you into a great comradeship, a kind of Blood Brotherhood. The members of this Brotherhood meet together regularly, especially before going into some great battle, and eat the bread of fellowship and drink the wine of sacrifice, thereby pledging themselves to stand by one another; and they do it in the presence of their great white comrade, Jesus Christ, pledging themselves to go forth with Him as Leader and to do what He would have them do, and that means that His service calls for heroes:

1. To fight for the Right at all costs.
2. To consecrate all our powers of mind,

WHAT IS CONFIRMATION ? 7

body and soul to the Cause, the world's Freedom and Salvation.

3. To be ready to die rather than yield.

Let us pray:

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew;
Help me to love what Jesus loves,
And do what He would do.

WHAT IS PRAYER?



"CHRIST'S FAITHFUL SOLDIER AND SERVANT UNTO HIS LIFE'S END"

WHAT IS PRAYER ?

I BELIEVE "prayer" to be as natural as breathing, eating, sleeping. A man, especially under the terrible conditions of war, finds he must relieve his feelings by such expressions as "Damn," "God," "Christ." This is really the soul seeking for expression, crying out for something it wants when under circumstances beyond human control, unconsciously crying out to some great Power Who rules over all. And these expressions, used carelessly, thoughtlessly, wrongly, in times of ease and places free from danger, become in the trenches real cries of the human soul.

A young Territorial of one of our London regiments, after going through the battle of Loos and after several days of hard fighting, marched back with his regiment to some village behind the lines for rest. He went

through everything, the fighting, shelling, hunger, thirst, and then the eight-mile march back, without a murmur. When all was over, and the word "Fall out" was given in the village where the regiment was to rest, this young soldier threw down his pack and said, "O God, I am properly done." His officer remarked to me, "That is a true prayer." All his tiredness, horror of the cruelty of war, all the pent-up feelings for comrades gone, found expression and relief in that outburst of the lad's soul.

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire ; it is also the *Christian's vital breath*.

If you cease to breathe your body ceases to live ; and if you cease to pray, your soul dies. In prayer we send up to God all we feel : we tell Him all that makes the heart ache ; we cry out like a child in the night, with no language but a cry. The important thing about prayer is not the words we say so much as it is the atmosphere we are breathing. It is keeping in touch with the great Author and Giver of Life ; it is a child seeking and

finding the encircling arms of a loving and forgiving Father.

A soldier's supplies of food and ammunition come to him as a rule through the organized channel, by ship, train, motor-lorry, ration-cart, ration-parties along the communication trench, and then is served out by the company quartermaster. But there have been times in this war when our infantry have been situated in the firing line where it has been impossible for rations and ammunition to reach him through the proper channel. Then our airmen have come to the rescue, and from above have dropped food and ammunition for the fighting man. So God has His regular organized channels by which He sends us our daily supplies. It is a wonderful chain of life by which our food comes. Hosea the prophet describes this chain when he says (Hosea ii. 21, 22), "I will hear, saith the Lord, the heavens, and they shall hear the earth ; and the earth shall hear the corn, the wine, and the oil ; and they shall hear Jezreel."

The spacious heavens which by their very vastness cry to the God Who made them to fill them God fills with life-giving power. The earth cries aloud to the heavens when it sends up its dust which returns again to the earth in the form of rain, each raindrop being a tiny speck of dust enveloped in moisture. Again, the seed in the ground cries out to mother earth to feed and nurture it, and the earth gives of its substance that which causes the corn, wine, and oil to be produced for the food of man.

But God can at times act without this chain. He can, where necessity demands it, send by what we call a miracle, that is by a way other than the ordinary course of nature, a quick and direct answer to our prayers.

Two of our airmen who were on a night-bombing expedition got their machine badly damaged by German anti-aircraft guns. The pilot knew he must bring his machine to ground at once on enemy territory, and without being able to see and choose a safe landing-place. So he prayed, and his

observer was, unknown to him, praying too: "O God, direct us to a safe landing-place." They came down safely in a field, but some nine miles behind the enemy's lines. Again they prayed: "O God, lead us safely back to our own lines." They had a long march along roads and across fields, and had to pass several Germans by the way, and one who seemed suspicious they had to roll in the mud and temporarily silence, but eventually they reached our lines in safety. God had answered their prayer and led them as surely as He in olden times led Israel through the Red Sea. They had cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He had delivered them out of their distresses and had led them forth by the right way. (Ps. cvii. 6, 7.)

A young officer was leaving his home in Ireland and his old mother to go forth and fight for his country. It was the last evening and the hour for parting had come; before the dawn of another day the soldier would be well on his way to serve in a great

venture. "Mother," said the stalwart soldier as he sat on the hearthrug at his mother's feet, the fire lighting up his youthful but manly face, "may I kneel at your knee and say my prayers as you taught me to do when a little chap?" And there he received his mother's blessing and the blessing truly of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire

Uttered, or unexpressed;

The motion of a hidden fire

That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,

The falling of a tear,

The upward glancing of an eye

When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech

That infant lips can try;

Prayer the sublimest strains that reach

The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,

The Christian's native air;

His watchword at the gates of death:

He enters heaven with prayer.

The saints in prayer appear as one

In word, and deed, and mind,

While with the Father and the Son

Sweet fellowship they find.

—MONTGOMERY.

WHAT IS
“THE HOLY COMMUNION”?



By permission of the Proprietors of "The Graphic"

THE SOLDIERS' SACRAMENT
Preserve thy Body and Soul

WHAT IS "THE HOLY COMMUNION"?

I AM sure our Lord meant by His institution of this sacred service to give us something so simple in itself that the least educated as well as the best educated person could share in its privileges and blessing. On the other hand, it was meant to be a simple, straightforward way of grasping what is in itself very wonderful, and what without some tangible sign or symbol is often very hard to realize, namely spiritual (or mystical) union between a man and his God, or between man and man. I should therefore define the term "The Holy Communion" as meaning "that bond of union between man and his God or between a man

and his fellowman which can be common to or enjoyed by all who care to enter into it."

Let us just try and see two main features of this Sacrament.

I. IT IS A FELLOWSHIP

It is our great Brotherhood Service.

The Rev. John J. Callan, C.F., in his little book called *Blood Brothers*, thus describes it:—

"Christ didn't want people to forget Him and His sacrifice and His love. So one night, just before He died, as they sat at supper, He took some wine from the table and some bread, and explained to His disciples that He was going to do something by which they might remember Him. He broke the bread and gave them each a piece, and said, 'This is My Body, which is broken for you.' Then He gave them the cup and said, 'This is My Blood, which is shed for you. Whenever you meet together eat bread and drink wine as I have taught you, in remembrance of Me.'"

The Rev. J. J. Callan then goes on to say :
" So they did ; and after Jesus was dead, they would meet, sometimes in their own city, and sometimes in far-off countries, but they would always take bread and wine, and do as He had commanded them. That kept Him alive in their memories, and showed to the world that they were followers of Jesus. How it was, perhaps none could say, but they found that by doing this they were made better men, and more able to resist temptation. But the big thing was that they were marked out as Jesus' men, the brotherhood of the Saviour of the world—a blood-brotherhood."

So the Holy Communion is a fellowship with Jesus, our great White Brother, a fellowship not with a *dead* Christ but a *living*, though we remind ourselves of how He died that we may know how the same love and friendship revealed by His death on the cross is ours in our fellowship with Him to-day.

Then the Holy Communion is also a

service of Fellowship between man and man, Christian and Christian.

It is so easy for earthly friendship to be simply something that is transitory, something selfish, something just of the flesh, and therefore "not lasting." But when we are one in Christ that fellowship lasts for ever.

"Those who love the Lord Jesus never see each other for the last time." As the great Brotherhood hymn says:—

O blest communion ! fellowship Divine !
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine ;
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine.

II. THE HOLY COMMUNION IS A FEAST

We feed on Him, the Bread of Life, in our hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The food is spiritual. It isn't something that feeds our bodies and through our bodies our spirits ; but it feeds our spirit or soul and through the strengthening of our souls our bodies are cleansed and made strong. As we pray in the prayer of humble access, "Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the

flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body and our souls washed through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us."

I remember when I was on the Belgian Coast with my Division in 1917 one of our sergeants was taken very severely wounded into a Belgian hospital. The doctor said, as he had lost so much blood, that the only thing to save his life was for some one to allow some of his blood to be taken and infused into the veins of this wounded sergeant. A young Belgian soldier in the hospital offered to make the sacrifice and his strong healthy blood saved the sergeant's life. So we in body, mind and spirit are weakened by the wounds and the disease of sin; nothing but the infusion into our whole being of a life that is stronger than and immune from sin can save us. So Jesus gives us His blood, His very life, that we may live. In the Holy Communion, if we desire

it and will take it, He gives us that purity, that unselfishness, that power of self-control, that love which is ready to be sacrificed, which will make us Christ-men, and enable those we meet to take knowledge of us that we have been in living touch with Jesus.

Let me give you one more illustration.

One day a poor woman who had an incurable disease and had spent all her money on doctors to no purpose, hearing that Jesus was passing by, went to find Him. As she reached the place where He was she found Him surrounded by a great crowd of people. Not wishing to bring her affliction publicly before such a crowd, she said to herself: "If I can but touch the tassel on the end of the plaid thrown over His shoulder He will know what I want and I shall be healed." So she gradually got nearer to Him and at last close enough to touch the tassel, and immediately virtue went forth from Jesus and healed her.

Now it was not the tassel that healed her, but because she touched the tassel, which

gave Jesus the sign that she wanted to be made whole, that caused Jesus to send forth His saving and healing grace. So in the Holy Communion: it is not the bread and wine that make our souls, our life purer and stronger, but because we touch those symbols according to Christ's command, and thus give Him the sign we want His life, that He imparts it to us.

And so we come ; Oh draw us to Thy Feet,
Most patient Saviour, Who canst love us still,
And by this Food, so awful and so sweet,
Deliver us from every touch of ill :
In Thine own service make us glad and free
And grant us never more to part with Thee.

Lastly let me say this: If we want to be God's knight-errants going forth into a dark world to fight the Dragon of Evil, helping and protecting and saving the weak and the oppressed and fallen, then like the knights of old we must constantly keep vigil with Him ; we must come if possible before every battle to this His appointed trysting-place. The great Iron Duke once sent for a soldier

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he knew was brave and could be relied upon to undertake the delivery of a dispatch which would involve the bearer on a great and dangerous adventure. Having explained the whole nature of the task to the soldier, the Duke said, "Are you willing to undertake this?" The soldier said, "One shake of your hand and I am ready to go." The Holy Communion is just that. It is just that grasp of the hand of Jesus which enables us to go forth, feeling we have His great friendship, come what may of hap or chance, to play the man and prove worthy of a Chief Whom we love and trust, and Whom we know loves and trusts us, too.

PSALM FOR THE KNIGHTS OF THE AIR

PSALM 91.

Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the most High: shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope, and my strong hold: my God, in him will I trust.

3 For he shall deliver thee from the snare of the hunter: and from the noisome pestilence.

4 He shall defend thee under his wings, and thou shalt be safe under his feathers: his faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

5 Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night: nor for the arrow that flieth by day.

6 For the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noon-day.

7 A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand: but it shall not come nigh thee.

8 Yea, with thine eyes shalt thou behold: and see the reward of the ungodly.

9 For thou, Lord, art my hope: thou hast set thine house of defence very high.

10 There shall no evil happen unto thee: neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways.

12 They shall bear thee in their hands: that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone.

13 Thou shalt go upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet.

14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him : I will set him up, because he hath known my Name.

15 He shall call upon me, and I will hear him : yea, I am with him in trouble ; I will deliver him, and bring him to honour.

16 With long life will I satisfy him : and shew him my salvation.

A PRAYER FOR A KNIGHT OF THE AIR

O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, be with me as I fly in the air. May Thy hand lead me and Thy right hand uphold me. Help me to do my duty with prudence and fearlessness, confident that in life or death the Eternal Father is my refuge and underneath me are His Everlasting Arms. Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake, Thy Son our Lord.

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